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Evaluating the Effectiveness of Contextual and Problem-Based Learning Approaches in the Pedagogical Practice of Christian Religious Education

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Abstract

This study aims to evaluate the implementation of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) and Problem-Based Learning (PBL) models within the Community Service Program (PPkM) in the Christian Religious Education (CRE) course at the Universitas Kristen Indonesia. Using a descriptive quantitative approach, the research involved 393 students across eight faculties who had participated in the PPkM initiative. The findings reveal that applying CTL and PBL significantly supports achieving CRE learning objectives by enhancing students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Moreover, these pedagogical models foster students' ability to reflect their faith through tangible actions, positioning the learning environment as a contextual and transformative ministry space. Evaluation scores averaged from "good" to "very good," indicating that service-based learning effectively bridges the gap between theory and practice. This research offers a vital contribution to the development of a Christian Religious Education curriculum that is contextually relevant and responsive to the dynamics of Indonesia's multicultural society

Keywords

Christian Religious Education; Community Service; Contextual Teaching And Learning; Problem-Based Learning

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1. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary Christian higher education faces multidimensional paradigmatic challenges in methodological aspects and fundamentally engaging epistemological and theological domains[7]. In the context of the postmodern era characterized by the relativization of truth, the decentralization of identity, and the infiltration of global values that deconstruct grand narratives the traditional model of education, centered on one-way transmission through static lecture methods, has suffered an erosion of its transformative significance (Freeman et al, 2014). When students are reduced to passive entities that merely absorb information, a disjunction emerges between the intellectual, practical, and spiritual dimensions of the educational process (Gardner, 2014) It critically reveals that passive pedagogy not only dulls students' reflective capacity, but also hinders the development of creative and adaptive competencies that are essential for responding to the complexities of an ever-changing reality (Trott, 2013). Therefore, within the landscape of Christian higher education, the transformation of the learning paradigm can no longer be positioned merely as a methodological alternative, but must be embraced as

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an urgent ethical and spiritual calling to reconstruct the educational process into a dialectical space for the formation of a rational, reflective, and participatory faith in engagement with the world.

Christian Religious Education (CRE) within the landscape of contemporary multicultural education in Indonesia must no longer be reduced to a dogmatic discourse detached from the dialectic of lived realities (Kaunang & Tafonao, 2023). It is called to emerge as a field of transformative formation that transcends normative instruction and moves toward a praxis of spiritual and social liberation. Amidst a societal configuration marked by identity pluralism, value fragmentation, and national complexity, Christian Religious Education (CRE) is challenged to provide a pedagogical space that not only equips students with critical and contextual theological frameworks but also cultivates ethical sensitivity, dialogical capacity, and a grounded prophetic ethos (Luby, 2021)(Franken, 2020). Within this framework, the learning objectives of Christian Religious Education (CRE), as formulated by the Universitas Kristen Indonesia, are not merely aimed at systematic doctrinal understanding, but are also directed toward the internalization of faith through concrete actions embodied in relationships, advocacy, and cross-boundary service that reflect the incarnation of Christ's love in a fragmented world. As emphasized by (Irizarry, 2003)Visionary religious education must bridge faith and culture as an existential dialectic that forms a resilient spiritual character that remains open to alterity. Jackson goes even further by calling for an urgent deconstruction of exclusive models of Christian Religious Education (CRE), to awaken a living faith praxis, a prophetic pedagogy that proclaims justice, nurtures diversity, and builds solidarity within a multicultural society (Jackson, 2013). Within this horizon, Christian Religious Education (CRE) is not merely a vehicle for the intellectualization of theology, but becomes a spiritual breath that animates both individual and collective transformation in the light of the living and dynamic Gospel (Pazmiño, 2010)(Lase, 2021).

In response to complex challenges, both structurally and in practice, the Universitas Kristen Indonesia, through the Center for Personality and Character Development (LPKK), has designed and implemented a curriculum grounded in UKI's core values humility, compassion and care, responsibility, discipline, professionalism, and integrity which is embodied in the Community Service Program (PPkM) (Pengembangan, dan, and Indonesia 2022). This program goes far beyond mere community service activities; it serves as a tangible means of incarnating the transformative values of faith into the social realm. In the context of PPkM, students not only acquire knowledge from professors and literature but also learn directly from the community through narratives of marginalized suffering, pervasive injustice, and the diversity that shapes the face of contemporary Indonesia. As emphasized by Palmer, True education only occurs when there is an authentic encounter between the whole self and the real world, far removed from the mere reproduction of sterile knowledge (Duman & Karakas-Ozur, 2020). Therefore, PPkM is not only a form of actualization of the Christian Religious Education (CRE) curriculum, but also a manifestation of life that enlivens, invites dialogue, and engages in the dynamics of the public space full of challenges.

Two revolutionary teaching models are applied to strengthen the deep learning experience in PPkM: Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) and Problem-Based Learning (PBL). CTL encourages students to connect academic concepts with real-life experiences, transforming the learning process into a search for meaningful and applicable insights, rather than merely theoretical knowledge. Meanwhile, PBL invites students to collaboratively, reflectively, and creatively solve authentic problems, positioning them as active subjects searching for transformative solutions (Sockalingam & Schmidt, 2011). Within the framework of PPkM, these two approaches function as catalysts that integrate theological reflection with social praxis, enabling students to know and truly be capable of doing and serving with integrity. Palmer emphasizes that the contextual approach is not only pedagogically relevant but also ontologically profound, as it places knowledge in a living and dynamic relationship with the real world (Palmer, 1998).

Thus, PPkM is not merely a learning space but a laboratory of life that transforms knowledge into concrete actions and empowering service. The implementation of the Contextual Teaching and Learning

(CTL) and Problem-Based Learning (PBL) models within the Community Service Program (PPM) has proven to contribute significantly to the achievement of the learning objectives of Christian Religious Education (CRE). Both approaches are grounded in the principle of learner-centered education, emphasizing the interconnection between academic content and real-life contexts—an approach that is particularly relevant in religious education.

The academic distinction of this research lies in the successful integrative synthesis of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach and Problem-Based Learning (PBL), which are contextually implemented within the framework of service-learning through the Community Service Program (PPkM), as a holistic transformative practice of Christian Religious Education at the higher education level. Various similar studies, such as the work of Agustina Dede Mite, Eveline Siregar, and Robinson Situmorang in *"Catholic Religious Learning with the Project-Based Learning (PjBL) Approach: Validity and Feasibility"*, which focuses on the instructional validation of PjBL in the context of Catholic education classroom tools, are limited to a technopedagogical approach and material validation. This study, therefore, shifts the focus from mere instructional evaluation to a dynamic exploration of the transformation of character, spirituality, and reflective capacity of students, tested within the real-world context of multicultural cross-faculty service (Mite et al., 2021). Similarly, the research by Joan Silva Setyowati et al., published in the article *"Implementation of Project-Based Learning Using Recycled Materials to Improve Learning Outcomes and Teamwork Attitudes in Christian Religious Education"*, which emphasizes improving learning outcomes and teamwork attitudes among elementary school students through the use of recycled materials, fails to present the reflective-theological dimension or the aspect of social transformation on a broader community service scale (Joan Silva Setyowati, Karnawati, 2019). In contrast, the article by Jeane M. Tulung and colleagues, *"Deuteronomy and Contextual Teaching and Learning in Christian-Jewish Religious Education"*, although offering a hermeneutical contribution to the biblical foundation of the CTL model, remains confined to the conceptual and normative realm, without delving into the empirical dynamics of its application within a plural, interdisciplinary community (Tulung et al., 2024).

Unlike previous works, this study occupies a distinctive space by integrating contextual pedagogical approaches and Christian character formation through concrete experiences serving a pluralistic society. Involving 393 students from eight cross-disciplinary faculties, this research not only provides in-depth quantitative data on the effectiveness of CTL and PBL in achieving the objectives of Christian Religious Education but also presents a performative arena where students' spirituality is tested and validated through contextual action in a complex social reality. In this scope, CTL and PBL are not merely methodological strategies but become an epistemological and liturgical framework that converges incarnational theology, participatory pedagogy, and prophetic praxis into a synergistic learning environment. Therefore, the most original contribution of this study lies in its positioning as a project for the reconstruction of Christian education in the era of pluralism, transforming Christian Religious Education (CRE) from a mere transmission of doctrine into a transformative ecosystem that produces reflective, contextual subjects ready to become agents of reconciliation in Indonesia's multicultural society. This research offers revolutionary pedagogical innovations and presents a paradigmatic leap in the theology of education, where learning, serving, and being a disciple of Christ are no longer separate entities but are unified into one dynamic and living praxis of faith.

Thus, integrating CTL and PBL within the Community Service Program offers a transformative pedagogical paradigm in Christian Religious Education. This model equips learners to engage meaningfully in learning, apply faith-based values in real-life contexts, and realize holistic and contextual educational goals within society.

Within this framework, PPkM no longer functions merely as an implementation method of the Christian Religious Education (CRE) course, but emerges as a profound liturgy of education, where service and teaching interact and converge within a meaningful transformative praxis. Students are not simply completing curricular assignments but living out their vocation as disciples of Christ, being

equipped to disciple others and engage in the holistic formation of character. As Kolibu et al. affirm, authentic Christian teaching is a form of ministry aimed at liberating individuals and fostering comprehensive life transformation (Kolibu et al., n.d.). Therefore, Christian Religious Education (CRE), as an integral component of the National Character Education (MKK) curriculum, should not be confined to normative instruction alone, but must function as a dialogical praxis that facilitates spiritual liberation while shaping disciples with the capacity to become agents of reconciliation within a pluralistic and challenging social context. Accordingly, the learning objectives of CRE should not be assessed merely by cognitive achievement, but more profoundly by the students' ability to internalize and embody the values of Christ's love within the rich socio-cultural diversity of the Indonesian nation, and to emerge as leaders capable of directing positive and constructive transformation amidst complex social dynamics (Sirait, 2024)

2. METHODS

This study employs a descriptive quantitative approach aimed at systematically portraying the implementation of the *Contextual Teaching and Learning* (CTL) and *Project-Based Learning* (PBL) models within the *Community Service Program* (PPkM) as part of the Christian Religious Education (PAK) course at Universitas Kristen Indonesia (UKI). Its primary focus is to assess the effectiveness of these two pedagogical models in supporting the achievement of learning objectives grounded in the integration of faith and knowledge within real-world contexts. The research subjects consist of **393 active students** from eight faculties who have participated in the PAK course and been involved in the PPkM program between 2019 and 2023. The respondent distribution includes students from the Faculty of Vocational Studies (64), Engineering (26), Economics and Business (43), Law (27), Social and Political Sciences (68), Medicine (34), Teacher Training and Education (71), and Literature and Language (60). This broad and proportionate representation across UKI's academic environment provides a robust empirical foundation for evaluating the implementation of CTL- and PBL-based PPkM.

Table 1. Faculty & Number of Respondents

No	Faculty	Number of Respondents	Sample Characteristics	Course
1	Vocational Faculty (VF)	64	Active Students	Christian Religious Education (CRE)
2	Engineering Faculty (EF)	26	Active Students	Christian Religious Education (CRE)
3	Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB)	43	Active Students	Christian Religious Education (CRE)
4	Faculty of Law (FL)	27	Active Students	Christian Religious Education (CRE)
5	Faculty of Social and Political Sciences (FISIPOL)	68	Active Students	Christian Religious Education (CRE)
6	Faculty of Medicine (FK)	34	Active Students	Christian Religious Education (CRE)
7	Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FKIP)	71	Active Students	Christian Religious Education (CRE)
8	Faculty of Literature and Language (FSB)	60	Active Students	Christian Religious Education (CRE)
Total		393	Active Students	

Data was collected through a closed-ended questionnaire employing a Likert scale to measure students' perceptions and experiences in applying project-based and contextual learning, particularly in engagement, content comprehension, and integrating Christian values within community service. The collected data were analyzed using quantitative descriptive statistics, including calculating mean scores, frequencies, and percentages for each indicator, which were then categorized into five levels based on the *Five Box Scale* method. Instrument validity was tested using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation technique, while reliability was assessed through the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, with instruments deemed reliable when $\alpha \geq 0.60$. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test was also applied to ensure the data followed a normal distribution pattern, essential for valid statistical inference. This analytical framework enabled the researchers to provide a precise and measurable empirical account of the impact of CTL and PBL implementation on character formation, theological understanding, and students' active participation in community-based Christian education.

Data collection was conducted using a questionnaire instrument that underwent two stages of pilot testing. The first trial involved 193 students, while the second involved 200 students. The instrument consisted of written statements measured using a Likert scale (Joshi et al., 2015). The questionnaire was the primary data collection tool because it allows respondents to express their perceptions and experiences in a **structured** and measurable format. The questionnaire serves as an effective instrument for collecting information from a large population with high efficiency. The instrument employed in this study was validated through both validity and reliability testing before its widespread distribution to the main research sample (Taherdoost & Hamta, 2017).

Table. 2. Sample Characteristics

Pilot Test	Sample Size	Sample Characteristics	Process and Outcome of Pilot Test
Pilot Test I	193 Students	Participants of the Community Service Program (PPkM) in the Christian Religious Education (CRE) course	Questionnaire/Survey Instrument
Pilot Test II	200 Students	Participants of the Community Service Program (PPkM) in the Christian Religious Education (CRE) course	Questionnaire/Survey Instrument

The data analysis technique in this study was conducted using a descriptive quantitative approach by calculating the mean scores from the Likert scale questionnaire responses. These scores were then categorized into five levels: very low, low, moderate, high, and very high. (Hussain, 2022) (Harpe, 2015). The data were analyzed to determine students' perceptions and experiences regarding implementing CTL- and PBL-based learning within the Community Service Program (PPkM) and its relevance to Christian Religious Education (CRE) learning objectives. The analysis results are expected to provide objective and scientific insights into the effectiveness of the applied pedagogical approaches and their impact on students' character formation and spirituality within community engagement.

Table 3. Average Score

Average Score	Criteria
4.21 – 5.00	Excellent
3.41 – 4.20	Good
2.61 – 3.40	Moderate
1.81 – 2.60	Low
1.00 – 1.80	Very Low

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of the study indicate that the implementation of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) and Project-Based Learning (PBL) models within the Community Service Program (PPkM) for the Christian Religious Education (CRE) course at the Universitas Kristen Indonesia has demonstrably proven its effectiveness in achieving the intended learning objectives.

Christian Religious Education

The findings, analyzed using the Likert scale as a scientifically standardized quantitative instrument, reveal with precision that the implementation of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) and Problem-Based Learning (PBL) models within the framework of the Community Service Program (PPkM) has evolved beyond a mere pedagogical approach; it has emerged as a formative medium that unites theological reflection with social action. In the variable of Christian Religious Education (CRE), the average score of 4.16, categorized as "good" on the Likert scale, substantially indicates that the majority of students do not merely recognize the cognitive relevance of CRE, but experience it as a living narrative of faith within the academic space. The highest score recorded on CRE8 (4.38) affirms that students perceive research-based learning as an academic task and a contextual spiritual quest. The elevated scores on CRE3 (4.33) and CRE7 (4.29) further underscore that collaborative, participatory, and reflective learning is not only appreciated but also constitutes a transformative learning environment where communal awareness and theological dialogue are actively cultivated. Conversely, the lower score on CRE2 (3.99)—though still within the "good" category—serves as a critical reflection on the gap between normative theological understanding and practical transformation, pointing to an epistemological implication: that faith must be continuously bridged with reality through a pedagogy that not only informs but incarnates.

Descriptive Analysis Results

Table 4. Questionnaire Response Scores for the Christian Religious Education Variable

No	Statement Item	Indicator	Response Scores						Criteria
			1	2	3	4	5	Average Score	
1	CRE1	The objective of Christian Religious Education (CRE) is to shape Christian character capable of bridging faith and culture within a pluralistic society	5	9	50	184	145	4.16	Good
2	CRE2	Able to practically apply theological principles from the Christian Religious Education (CRE) course in social relationships across diverse identities within society	5	16	82	165	125	3.99	Good
3	CRE3	Christian Religious Education (CRE) encourages critical and reflective thinking regarding the dynamics of Christian faith within both global and local contexts	3	2	30	185	173	4.33	Very Good
4	CRE4	Experiencing spiritual growth through contextual learning experiences and community service practices grounded in Christian Religious Education (CRE)	2	9	69	201	112	4.05	Good

No	Statement Item	Indicator	Response Scores						Criteria
			1	2	3	4	5	Average Score	
5	CRE5	PPkM (Community Service Program) is an integral part of Christian Religious Education (PAK) that develops individuals' capacity to become servants of Christ's love in the real world	3	6	84	176	124	4.05	Good
6	CRE6	Christian Religious Education (PAK) aids in the internalization of Christian values such as integrity, responsibility, and humility, translating them into actions	3	5	55	188	142	4.17	Good
7	CRE7	Through service-based project learning, students undergo discipleship that nurtures the courage to serve	3	4	33	190	163	4.29	Very Good
8	CRE8	Recognizing the importance of independent research and theological reflection to deepen the understanding of Christian Religious Education (PAK) and enhance academic contribution	3	3	28	168	191	4.38	Very Good
9	CRE9	Christian Religious Education (PAK) fosters sensitivity to social injustice and cultivates a calling for cross-boundary service	3	4	71	206	109	4.05	Good

Within the Christian Religious Education (CRE) variable, findings indicate that students do not merely acknowledge the significance of CRE at the cognitive level, but existentially embody it as a spiritual expression internalized through their learning experiences. The collaborative and reflective pedagogical model has fostered a communal consciousness that integrates faith, dialogical engagement, and praxis. Nevertheless, a conceptual disparity between normative understanding and practical actualization remains evident, signaling the imperative to strengthen pedagogical approaches that are more contextual, applicative, and transformative to bridge the gap between theoretical frameworks and operational implementation in the holistic formation of students' faith-based character.

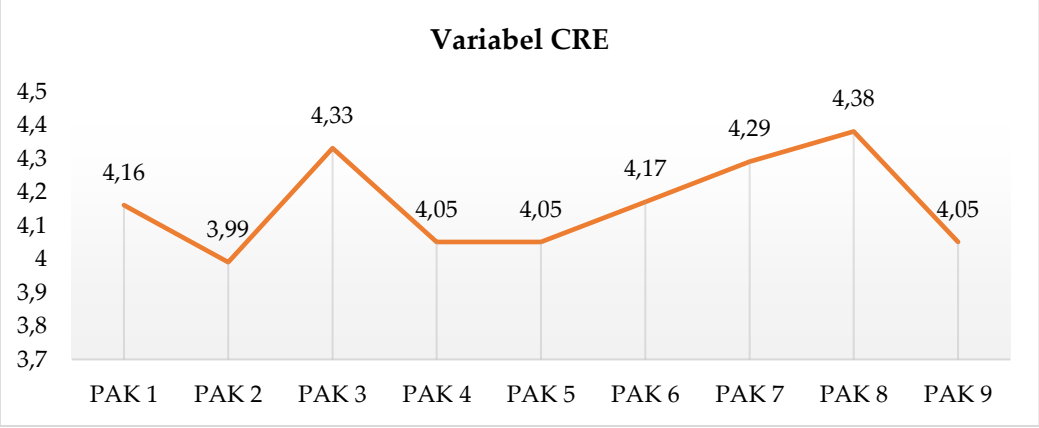


Figure 1. Average Scores of CRE Variable

Figure 1. Average Scores of CRE Variable presents a quantitative configuration that reflects the conceptual contours within Christian Religious Education (CRE) learning dynamics. The highest scores observed at CRE8 (4.38) and CRE7 (4.29) form a significant elevation, indicating heightened cognitive and affective engagement in independent research and discipleship practice—two areas that epistemologically signify the internalization of theological values through authentic learning experiences. The consistently high scores above 4.0 across most items establish a pedagogical plateau—a zone of interpretive stability that underscores the effectiveness of the CTL-PBL model in consolidating meaning, relevance, and transformative learning. Meanwhile, the slight decline at CRE2 (3.99) forms an evaluative dip, which analytically reveals a transitional gap between normative understanding and practical implementation, thereby identifying a strategic locus for context-based pedagogical intervention. Thus, the zigzag pattern represented in the graph is not a sign of inconsistency but a visual articulation of the creative tension between reflection and action in forming transformative Christian character education.

Based on the data analysis, the Christian Religious Education (CRE) course in higher education is an academic discipline aimed at investigating, understanding, and integrating Christian faith teachings with pedagogical approaches (D. I. Smith, 2019). This discipline focuses on the development of students' intellectual and spiritual understanding, as articulated by Anthony & Benson, by utilizing a systematic, research-based academic approach (Anthony, Michael J. and Benson, 2016). Esther Rela Intarti further asserts that Christian religious education does not merely introduce students to sacred texts and theological doctrines, but also emphasizes a critical understanding of how these teachings interact with social, cultural, and historical contexts (Intarti, 2021). This study aims to develop individuals who critically evaluate and apply Christian principles within various contexts.

In its implementation, Christian Religious Education entails a rigorous engagement with the Bible, encompassing both hermeneutics and exegesis, thereby requiring students to interpret sacred texts within their proper historical and theological frameworks (Gordon D. Fee & Douglas Stuart, 2015). As a key component, Christian theology encompasses the study of core Christian doctrines, the history of the Church, and the development of theological thought throughout history (McGrath, 2017). This study is essential for providing students with a strong theological foundation, enabling them to integrate theological knowledge with real-life contexts. The teaching methodology commonly employed involves an interdisciplinary approach, combining the study of history, philosophy, sociology, and psychology to offer a comprehensive understanding of the Christian faith and its application in contemporary life (J. K. A. Smith, 2019). This approach enables students to explore how theological aspects interact with social and cultural dynamics. Moreover, the methodology supports the development of critical and reflective thinking skills, which are essential for applying the Christian faith in various life contexts (Ward, 2017).

Christian religious education in the context of higher education plays a vital role in facilitating interfaith dialogue and addressing contemporary issues from a Christian perspective (Mince et al., 2024) (Holland, 2016). Volf explains that this requires the ability to analyze and respond to both global and local challenges through the lens of Christian faith, as well as to engage in discussions on ethics, morality, and social responsibility (Volf, 2017). Thus, Christian religious education equips students to become leaders capable of bridging diverse perspectives and contributing positively to a multicultural society (Reni Triposa & Kolibu, 2024).

The teaching methods in Christian religious education include case studies, text analysis, and community-based projects, which are designed to integrate theory with practice (Mugo et al., 2024). This approach not only supports academic understanding but also develops practical skills that are relevant to community service and the application of Christian values in the context of everyday life (D. I. Smith et al., 2021). This reflects an effort to link theoretical knowledge with practical experience that

can be implemented in various social and professional contexts.

Overall, Christian religious education in higher education aims to shape individuals who possess a deep understanding of the Christian faith and can apply its teachings in a wide and diverse range of contexts. This includes the development of character, critical thinking skills, and the ability to contribute effectively to society. Thus, Christian religious education bridges academic knowledge and real-life practice, integrating theological understanding with relevant practical skills.

The Implementation of the MKK Teaching Assignment within the Framework of the PPkM

Based on Table 5, the Likert scale analysis results in this study affirm the effectiveness of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) and Problem-Based Learning (PBL) models and signify a seismic epistemological shift within the field of Christian Religious Education. With an overall mean score of 4.10 ("good" category) and peak values recorded at PPkM7 (4.26) and PAK8 (4.38), the data present not merely descriptive insight but a transformative revelation. These findings crystallize the pedagogical revolution in which contextual learning models have successfully transmuted theoretical instruction into a living faith experience deeply embodied in students' learning processes. Seven of nine core indicators surpassed the psychometric reliability threshold ($\alpha \geq 0.60$), delineating the *zone of pedagogical transformation*. In this paradigmatic integration space, cognition, affectivity, and spiritual praxis intersect dynamically.

The slight anomaly detected at PPkM3 (3.99) is not interpreted as a negative deviation, but rather as a strategic inflection point for curricular innovation through the application of *chaos theory* and *fractal pedagogy*—approaches that allow for the synthesis of local micro-contexts with global educational challenges in a cohesive, adaptive learning design. Furthermore, the consistent pattern forming a *plateau of excellence* across most indicators demonstrates that the CTL-PBL framework functions systemically as a *character formation engine*—a mechanism operating at multiple levels: neuro-pedagogical (via multisensory stimulation), socio-theological (through internalization of transcendent values), and cultural-hermeneutical (through contextual theological decoding in pluralistic settings).

Descriptive Analysis Results

Table 5. Questionnaire Response Scores for the Community Service Program Variable

No	Statement Item	Indicator	Response Scores						Criteria
			1	2	3	4	5	Average Score	
1	PPkM1	Service to the community is an integral part of the process of contextual Christian faith learning	1	7	62	191	132	4.13	Good
2	PPkM2	Experiencing transformative learning through direct involvement in service activities based on the values of Christian Religious Education (CRE)	2	6	82	198	105	4.01	Good
3	PPkM3	Challenged to apply the love of Christ in real, complex situations within a pluralistic society	6	23	65	174	125	3.99	Good
4	PPkM4	Experiencing personal and spiritual growth through reflection on service practices	3	9	72	207	102	4.01	Good
5	PPkM5	Service activities are more conscious of ethical and social responsibilities as disciples of Christ	5	5	71	209	103	4.02	Good

No	Statement Item	Indicator	Response Scores						Criteria
			1	2	3	4	5	Average Score	
6	PPkM6	Learning to integrate theoretical knowledge gained in the classroom with the real needs of society through service	3	5	55	188	142	4.17	Good
7	PPkM7	Seeing that service to the community is an effective means of living out the values of the Gospel in everyday life	6	7	43	161	176	4.26	Very Good
8	PPkM8	Experiencing meaningful learning through team collaboration in creatively addressing community issues	5	10	67	197	114	4.03	Good
9	PPkM9	Through PPkM, individuals are equipped to become Christian leaders capable of addressing social challenges in a prophetic manner	2	5	53	170	163	4.24	Very Good

The significant findings of this study demonstrate that the integration of CTL and PBL models within the Community Service Program (PPkM) has effectively transformed Christian Religious Education into a more contextual, reflective, and faith-driven learning experience. The average score of 4.10, with the highest achievement recorded at PAK8 (4.38), affirms the pedagogical efficacy of this approach. At the same time, the slight fluctuation at PPkM3 (3.99) highlights a strategic opportunity for further innovation through more applicable and transformative pedagogical interventions.

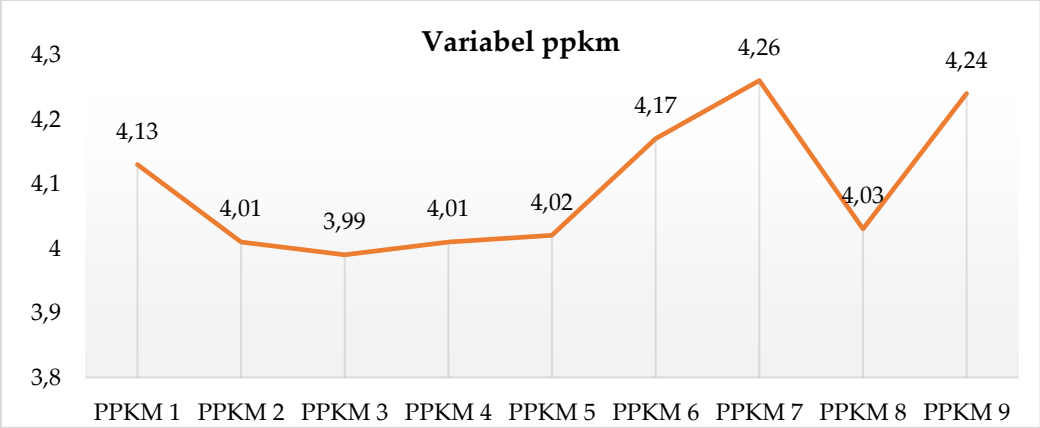


Figure 2. Average Score of the PPKM Variable

Figure 2. Average Scores of the PPkM Variable presents a dramatic line graph that traces a "stairway to transformation" pattern—beginning with PPkM3 (3.99) as a strong baseline, surging sharply to PPkM6 (4.17), and reaching its highest peak at PPkM7 (4.26). This graphical formation resembles a "sawtooth of excellence", where each successive peak signifies a qualitative leap: from conceptual understanding (PPkM1: 4.13), to practical application (PPkM6: 4.17), and ultimately to the internalization of values (PPkM7: 4.26). Remarkably, the variation between data points spans only 0.27, indicating a high degree of consistency in the CTL-PBL model's ability to generate a holistic impact. The consistently elevated scores within the 4.0+ range are not mere numerical values but rather a visual testimony to the pedagogical domino effect, in which each program component reinforces the others in an exponential trajectory of learning and transformation.

The teaching assignment for National Character Education (MKK) within the PPkM framework must align the representative knowledge with service as the representation of the educator's faith to

maintain the quality of teaching based on the Bible, without being diminished by worldly ideologies. The theological foundation for teaching is in Matthew 28:19-20, the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. In this passage, Jesus gives three commands to His disciples before He ascends to heaven, one of which is "to teach." This indicates that PPkM is closely related to teaching, with the goal being for everyone to know the Love of Christ through the lives of lecturers and students, as it is practiced in society. The Apostle Paul emphasizes discipleship in his message to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:2, where he highlights that the aim of teaching is for the one taught to be able to teach others. Therefore, it must be understood that to educate is to serve, just as Jesus Christ's mission on earth was to serve, not to be served (Kolibu, 2017).

This finding reinforces that the CTL (Contextual Teaching and Learning) and PBL (Project-Based Learning) approaches are not merely instructional strategies, but represent a transformative path to shaping students who are not only cognitively competent but also resilient in social and spiritual praxis (Alkhannani, 2021)(Kolibu, 2017). The CTL model emphasizes the connection between the teaching material and real-life contexts (Thamrin et al., 2024)In this context, it is manifested through the students' service to the Christian community and the broader society. Likewise, the PBL model provides students with the opportunity to solve real-world problems through a collaborative, creative, and reflective approach (Kokotsaki et al., 2016) (Sockalingam & Schmidt, 2011). Both approaches have proven to be catalysts for developing an integrative and applicable Christian character.

Service-based learning, as implemented in PPkM, not only expands the scope of education from the classroom to the community but also makes service a teaching method. This aligns with Palmer's thought, which asserts that true teaching is not merely a process of transferring knowledge, but an authentic encounter between the educator's self, the subject matter, and the world in which the students live (Palmer, 2007). In this study, students experienced not only the transfer of knowledge but also a transformation of self through the experience of serving. Through CTL and PBL, students learn about love and live out that love in their relationships with others, as emphasized in Matthew 28:20 and 2 Timothy 2:2.

A deeper discussion also reveals that the low scores on the CRE2 item (3.99) and PPKM3 item (3.99), though still within the "good" category, indicate the need to deepen further the integration between theoretical learning and students' social realities. This underscores the importance of pedagogical discipleship, which involves the formation of faith through active interaction with the real world. This concept is reinforced by Triposa & Kolibu, who state that true Christian education is a service-oriented action grounded in faith and directed towards the transformation of society (Reni Triposa & Kolibu, 2024). Thus, the results of this study also signal the need for an increased intensity of spiritual development and contextual reflection in the implementation of PPkM, so that all students can experience a more comprehensive formation.

The study results also show that students generally understand Christian values such as humility, responsibility, and integrity, and apply them in the context of service. This proves that CTL and PBL strengthen the understanding of CRE content and incarnate Gospel values into students' real lives. As John Dewey (1903) stated, education should bridge the gap between experience and reflection, and in this study, the experience of service becomes a space for concrete and contextual faith reflection (Ord, 2012).

From a theological perspective of service, these results indicate that students view service as a spiritual calling rooted in God's love. They no longer perceive PPkM as an academic obligation but as part of their response to the Great Commission of Christ (Matthew 28:19-20). This suggests that the CTL and PBL models have transcended mere learning methods and have transformed into a liturgy of learning, where learning becomes worship and worship becomes a means of social transformation.

Thus, the service-based learning model that integrates CTL and PBL has effectively achieved the objectives of CRE education, namely the formation of students who are steadfast in faith, capable of

critical thinking, exhibit ethical behavior, and serve with love within a multicultural society. These findings not only reinforce the significance of Christian education in higher education but also present an alternative model for the transformation of theological pedagogy within the context of a pluralistic and dynamically evolving nation

4. CONCLUSION

This study conclusively demonstrates that the integration of Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) and Problem-Based Learning (PBL) within the Community Service Program (PPkM) has generated a paradigmatic transformation in Christian Religious Education (CRE). An analysis of responses from 393 participants across eight faculties indicates that this approach is not only pedagogically effective but also significantly impacts faith-based character formation. The average scores of 4.16 for CRE and 4.10 for PPkM fall within the "good" to "very good" category, with the highest achievements recorded in indicators CRE8 (4.38) and PPkM7 (4.26), evidencing successful internalization of Gospel values through reflective learning and contextually grounded service. These findings affirm that CTL and PBL effectively bridge cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions within a unified, contextualized faith-learning experience, wherein theology is not merely taught but authentically embodied.

Nevertheless, conceptual gaps were identified in indicators such as CRE2 and PPkM3 (each at 3.99), signaling the need for enhanced integration between theological theory and social praxis. To address this, the study recommends strengthening spiritual mentoring, intensifying contextual reflection, and developing an adaptive curriculum responsive to the complexities of a pluralistic society. Thus, this research enriches academic discourse in theological education and presents an innovative pedagogical model that can be replicated to cultivate reflective, transformative, and socially relevant Christian leaders amid contemporary challenges.

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